

Meeting of the  
**New Zealand Fish and Game Council**  
Bay Plaza Hotel, Wellington  
Saturday 24 May 2014  
*Commencing at 9.30 am*

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## **INTRODUCTION**

### **Present** (in geographical appointee order)

Chris Lynch (arrived 9.40 am), Colin Sherrard, Lindsay Lyons, Aaron Wakeford, Alan Flynn, Andrew Morris, Paul Dixon-Didier, Jean Willis, Peter Robinson, Matthew Hall, Dave Witherow and Paul Stenning.

### **In Attendance**

Robert Sowman (Policy & Planning Manager), Alison Lyall (Finance & Administration Manager), Hamish Carnachan (Communications Manager).

10.55 am after the Councillor only session the meeting was joined by Romon Sargeson (Taranaki F&G councillor), Phil Teal (Manager Wellington F&G) and NZ Council staff.

## **1. Appointment of Chairman and Committee Members**

Robert Sowman explained that the Chief Executive was unwell and off work. Acting on his behalf, Robert recounted that there had been a telephone conference call (8 April 2014) to discuss the resignation of Peter Robinson as NZ Council Chairman and a process to be put in place to elect a new chair. An exchange of emails had followed the Conference Call proposing a nominee. This process now needed to be formally put to the meeting, so a call for nominations for the position of New Zealand Fish and Game Council Chairman was made.

Paul Dixon Didier/Aaron Wakeford  
Nominated Lindsay Lyons

There being no further nominations and no opposition to the nomination put, it was resolved

**That Lindsay Lyons becomes the new Chairman of the New Zealand Fish and Game Council.**

Lindsay Lyons, on being declared the new Chairman of the Council, assumed the Chair.

## **2. Welcome**

The Chairman welcomed everyone and thanked them for their support and the resolution to make him their Chairman. He then outlined the order of the day, starting with a Councillor only session to discuss legal advice and the attendance of the Director-General of Conservation to speak to the Council after the morning tea break at 10.30 am.

The Chairman then acknowledged and thanked Peter Robinson as the immediate past chairman and the time and effort he put into the role.

At 9.45 am the Chairman called for a Councillor only session and Robert Sowman left the meeting.

### 3 Councillor Only Session RESOLUTION TO EXCLUDE THE PUBLIC

*Section 48, Local Government Official Information and Meetings Act 1987.*

Time: 9.35 am.

**Resolved** (/)

**That the public (including staff) be excluded from the following parts of the proceedings of this meeting, namely item 1.3. Councillor only session to discuss future management of the Council.**

The general subject of each matter to be considered while the public is excluded, the reason for passing this resolution in relation to each matter and the specific grounds under Section 48(1) of the Local Government Official Information and Meetings Act 1987 for the passing of this resolution are as follows:

<b>GENERAL SUBJECT OF EACH MATTER TO BE CONSIDERED</b>	<b>REASON FOR PASSING THIS RESOLUTION IN RELATION TO EACH MATTER</b>	<b>GROUND(S) UNDER SECTION 48(1) FOR THE PASSING OF THIS RESOLUTION</b>
Information provided in confidence	Good reason to withhold exists under section 9 of the Official Information Act 1982	Section 48(1)(a)(ii)

This resolution is made in reliance on Section 48(1)(a) of the Local Government Official Information and Meetings Act 1987 and the particular interest or interests protected by Section 9 of the Official Information Act 1982 which would be prejudiced by the holding of the whole or relevant part of the proceedings of the meeting in public are as follows:

<b>ITEM</b>	<b>REASON UNDER THE OFFICIAL INFORMATION ACT 1982</b>	<b>SECTION</b>	<b>PLAIN ENGLISH REASON</b>	<b>WHEN REPORT CAN BE RELEASED</b>
	Maintain legal professional privilege	Sec 9(2)(h)	To enable the Council to discuss legal advice.	Once the matter is completed and the legal advisor agrees to its release.

#### **Note**

Section 48(4) of the Local Government Official Information and Meetings Act 1987 provides as follows:  
“(4) Every resolution to exclude the public shall be put at a time when the meeting is open to the public, and the text of that resolution (or copies thereof):

- (a) Shall be available to any member of the public who is present; and
- (b) Shall form part of the minutes of the Council.”

Time: 10.45 am.

**Resolved** (Colin Sherrard/Aaron Wakeford)

**That the open meeting of the New Zealand Fish and Game Council resumes.**

Morning tea break.

10.55am the open meeting recommenced with NZ Council staff, the Director-General of Conservation, Romon Sargeson (Taranaki F&G councillor) and Phil Teal (Manager Wellington F&G) joining the meeting.

The Chairman in welcoming Lou Sanson the Director-General of Conservation, acknowledged the NZ Council has not seen a lot of past Director-Generals and that the Council appreciated his interest in Fish & Game so early in his tenure. Before inviting Lou to speak, the Chairman then invited everyone to introduce themselves and their appointed region or position.

#### **4 Department of Conservation and NZ Council Relationship**

Director-General Lou Sanson spoke to the Council explaining that he hoped to meet at least once a year and that Kay Booth (Deputy Director-General Conservation Partnerships) would also be available to meet with the Council.

He explained he has been in the job for six months, taking up the role in September 2013. In June he had been named deputy-director general of the department's new conservation partnerships group (Kay Booth now holds that position). He grew up in Hokitika, was formerly the DOC conservator for Southland, and spent the past 11 years as chief executive of Antarctica New Zealand, in Christchurch.

Lou outlined what has been happening with the Department and the issues it is dealing with. The strategy he has inherited and strongly agrees with is "growing conservation by working with others." The Department is looking for synergies to connect community, and private interest groups with conservation. Al Morrisson as the previous DG worked hard to make conservation mainstream. The Department is working closely with environment and education initiatives alongside people such as Stephen Tindal and Annette and Neal Plowman (NEXT Foundation).

The "Battle for our Birds" predator control programme recognises that DOC currently has only one tool that really works across landscape scale ecosystems and that is 1080. Further research breakthroughs are desperately needed to control predators in NZ. Some very innovative conservation work is also occurring without DOC's direct involvement (self setting traps, Project Janzoon, Cape Kidnappers restoration) and the Department is looking how to help such innovation.

The session then took the form of questions and answers, starting with how to get regional government councils to do more. He explained that water quality was a key leadership role for the Ministry for the Environment working with Regional Councils. However, DOC is looking to significantly improve relationships with regional councils, especially Environment Canterbury.

Lou was asked how the Department will manage its conflicts of interest in protecting water resources and engage with development oriented agencies. He replied that DOC has to be very careful with any relationship and preferred to work closely alongside agencies such as Fonterra to progress sustainability initiatives but agreed DOC would always retain the right to use RMA advocacy processes where required. He was also asked about the Department's support for non-indigenous species and believed the Department is embracing recreational opportunity and is well aware of existing resources such as trout and deer that are valued by thousands of New Zealanders and international visitors. The key is managing them within NZ natural landscapes and ecosystems. He had just been to the inaugural meeting of the Game Animal Council.

It was suggested that Fish and Game has had a good relationship with local DOC staff. However, it appeared to Councillors that the Department's position is dictated to further up-the-line, in the National Office or by Ministers. Lou acknowledged that locally the relationship with Fish and Game seems to have worked well. He acknowledged that nationally, the Department has to work more closely on its relationships. Lou is meeting with Bryce and will work further on building this relationship.

It was pointed out that it is likely water will be an election issue in 2014. Lou felt there is a shift going on with a growing recognition to address the high value to NZ of freshwater to nature and the economy.

Lou said he is impressed with some of the innovation by Environment Canterbury and there was a need to share best practice across the environmental sector. It was explained that a DOC representative was not always present in the public debate with many local issues. Lou conceded more liaison is needed with local councils. The Department is hopeful that by getting its relationships right it will get greater recognition on what it is delivering. It cannot be on every group everywhere. Where there are high natural values DOC will certainly get involved.

Despite Fish and Game's statutory functions being set out in the Conservation Act, it does not always get DOC support in its role. Lou responded by saying DOC needs to know the issues first and where resources and priorities enabled this DOC would support communities in critical conservation issues.

Kay Booth is to be the relationship manager for Fish and Game. Most issues should be dealt with directly in the regions with Partnerships Directors. However, nationally, DOC is expecting to meet with F&G on a more regular basis. Lou explained that his priority is getting the new Department structure going after a difficult time.

Lou was asked about meeting with the Minister of Conservation. His feeling is that this Minister works hard in conservation. One of the key issues to resolve is whether Fish and Game is a statutory body but at times acts as an NGO. This can create confusion for both the public and the Government. It will take work on all sides to resolve this.

12.05pm the session ended with the DG. The Chairman thanked Lou Sanson for contributing so openly and welcomed future exchanges. At this point, the meeting returned to the agenda and commencement of its open meeting.

## **5 Apologies**

Bryce Johnson (Chief Executive) and the DG Conservation's representative.

Resolved (Jean Willis/Dave Witherow)

**That the apologies from Bryce Johnson and the DG Conservation's representative be accepted.**

## **6 Identification of Other Urgent Business**

The subject of a new Council sub-committee was raised for consideration as an extra business item. It was noted the sub-committee needed to be given the ability to co-opt a 4<sup>th</sup> member and come back to the next meeting with a report.

Disagreement was voiced over the order of the agenda for this meeting and the need to follow council's policy on its agenda order and deal first with the minutes and matters arising, rather than later in the meeting as proposed in the Agenda. Robert Sowman explained the agenda order had been set in this way to help the Council get through as many items as possible with a

priority being given to budget and licence fee items. This was recognised but it was agreed to take minutes of the previous meeting and matters arising earlier in the agenda. A request was also made for time-frames to be allocated for each item to help keep the meeting on track time wise.

## **7 Annual Agenda/Conflicts of Interest Register**

Two items are listed for the May meeting – National budget and licence fee recommendations and Angler Notice considerations. There are covered by this agenda.

Additional items need to be placed on the Annual Agenda:

- There is a need for a sub-committee item to be added to the July meeting to determine the information it needs to report.
- In October there should be a Councillor self- appraisal review
- November the completion of a review of the Chief Executive’s Performance.

The Conflicts of Interest register was made available at the meeting and will be updated after every meeting and retained as a running record as required in the 2013 Audit report.

12.20 pm: The meeting paused at this point to break for lunch

1.00 pm: the meeting began its afternoon session.

## **8 Operational Report**

**Project 1420 Public Awareness and Support:** It was agreed the Horizons Research survey findings were an excellent survey for Fish and Game interests. However, it was questioned whether it would have been better to put the survey results out but not put political spin on them. Feedback has been mixed. A lot of subsequent comment is anecdotal.

The NZ Council would like an item on a future agenda for a de-brief on the Horizon research and to discuss a potential change in its public awareness focus. It was suggested people do not have a problem with the message but with its delivery.

**Project 1710 NZ Council meetings:** Sir Geoffrey Palmer’s opinion was referred to and the wish to have this as a hard copy to annotate. Councillors ask for a hard copy to be sent out and the opinion to be discussed at the next meeting.

**Project 1880 Coordination General:** Reference to the 2014 research programme was queried and established that it is for the 2014/15 financial year.

Resolved (Chris Lynch/Jean Willis)

**That the Operations Report for May 2014 be received**

## **9 Minutes of the NZ Council Meeting held in Methven, March 2014.**

Apart from follow-up points of clarification on a couple of items, the minutes were accepted.

Resolved (Jean Willis/Andrew Morris)

**That the minutes be a true and correct record of the March 2014 meeting.**

## **10 Matters Arising from the Public Included Meeting Minutes**

A session to better explain the layout and key sections of the financial report still needs to be held. It was acknowledged time is a premium for this meeting and it should be a priority for the next meeting.

Investigation of cultural Assessment (referred to in the cultural values of freshwater streams at an Ashburton-Hinds Zone Committee meeting) being developed for Fish and Game values needs to be placed on the accumulated action from the March 2014 meeting.

## **11 Review of Accumulated Action from Previous Meetings**

No items were raised for discussion.

## **12 NZ Council Bi-Monthly Financial Report**

Discussion occurred on actual interest compared to interest budgeted with questions asked as to why the interest budgeted was set so high. At the time of setting the budget more funds were held in this account than at year end.

The spreadsheet of legal project spending had been accidentally left out from the agenda papers. This spreadsheet is to be sent out to Councillors. It was agreed regions still need to provide a budget report on each project as part of updating projects in the legal update report.

Resolved (Aaron Wakeford/Paul Dixon Didier)

**That the NZ Council financial report to 30 April 2014 be adopted.**

## **13 National Finance Report**

No discussion resulted in consideration of this item.

Resolved (Andrew Morris/Aaron Wakeford):

**That the National Financial Report to 30 April 2014 be received**

## **14 Specific Proposals for Capital Expenditure**

There were no proposals for capital expenditure to be considered at this meeting.

Resolved (Peter Robinson/Andrew Morris)

**That the Specific Proposals for Capital Expenditure report be received.**

## **15 Research Proposals for 2014/15**

The recommendations made by managers were accepted by the NZ Council. \$100,000 is allocated for this research. It was explained that invoices for projects can span more than one financial year and that the \$100,000 would be sufficient for the period despite total costs being \$102,500 as shown in the table below.

### **Summary of projects and costs (2014-15 year)**

<b>Project name</b>	<b>Cost (\$)</b>
Mallard research (Productivity)	48,000*
Citizens Science project	5,000
Game Harvest Survey (GHS)	500
National Angler Survey (% of cost)	40,000
Lindis River trout	9,000
<b>Total</b>	<b>102,500</b>

This is in addition to the \$34,301 for game research resulting from the \$1 increase placed on the AWS game licence in 2013.

It was also noted that Southland reserve fund contribution is still paying for mallard research expenses in the current financial year. However, its contribution will be exhausted by the start of the new financial year commencing 1 September 2014.

Resolved (Andrew Morris/Paul Stenning)

**That the NZ Council**

- 1. Note that Southland's contribution of \$300,000 over three years to mallard research has now been disbursed.**
- 2. Note that the \$1 increase placed on the Adult Whole Season game licence in 2013 continues to be applied.**
- 3. Approve the research projects listed above totalling \$102,500 for the 2014/15 financial year.**

## **16 Extraordinary Expenditure Application from Otago Fish and Game Council**

There was no further discussion on this item. The Council accepted the memorandum from the Otago Fish and Game Manager.

Resolved (Dave Witherow/Aaron Wakeford)

**That the NZ Council support Otago's Exceptional Expenditure of \$50,000 from Otago Reserves.**

## **17 Environmental Coordination Role**

Phil Teal (Wellington Manager) spoke to this item. Concern was raised over having the person resident in a particular region. This concern was countered by the view to keep the regional focus there is some sense in basing the position in a region. This position is to be advertised and was widely supported. A query was raised over the linkage between this position and the debate on whether Fish and Game should have in-house legal capability. It was accepted that whilst there is a linkage, the two are separate and should not influence each other.

Resolved: (Dave Witherow/Jean Willis)

**That the NZ Council:**

- 1. Endorse the managers contestable fund decision of \$80,000 for Wellington Fish and Game Council to engage a Resource Management Position**
- 2. Agree the Environmental Coordination Role be established at Wellington Fish and Game Council to deal with RMA policy and planning as per the contestable fund application.**
- 3. Requires a detailed report on the role presented twice yearly (Feb & July mtg), with the position to be reviewed and evolve over time.**

## **18 Youth Programme Funding**

Peter Robinson is currently employed in a regional capacity fulfilling this role and acknowledged a conflict of interest but was happy to answer any questions. The report in the agenda was prepared by the Regional Manager from North Canterbury and responds to issues raised by Managers in April.

It was argued, the process undertaken to fund this project is outside the process set down for consideration of new activity in the budget round. It started as a sponsored project and when the sponsor withdrew it has been paid for through North Canterbury's reserves, without approval from the NZ Council.

The project is aimed at targeting new membership/support for the future. Fish in Schools and engagement in curriculum activity is about making youth aware of freshwater issues and provide an introduction to sports fish and fishing. However, there was some debate about the length of time before a primary school child became a licence holder and other associated factors (family & friends who fish, etc) that might influence that decision and how to measure whether that decision might be attributed to a single project like a youth programme. It was felt the KPIs in the paper were too general with the suggestion that enthusiasm is bound to follow such initiatives in the class room.

Peter was asked to leave the meeting at 3.00 pm for Council to have further discussion. Discussion returned to the proposal being outside the established process and the need for a national programme manned by a single person when many regions were already active in this area. It was argued efforts being undertaken in regions already extended beyond merely holding kids fish-out days. Staff pointed out that such extension was only occurring in a few regions while elsewhere youth/recruitment activity was piecemeal and lacked any coordination or performance measures.

The paper prepared for this meeting called for \$100,000 support. The NZ Council was not supportive of this, and indeed opposed the support shown for the proposal by managers of \$30,000. North Canterbury needed to show more tangible benefits from the proposal and to fund it correctly. It was welcome to reapply next budget round if it wished this proposal to be considered again. It did not have NZ Council support for this financial year.

Resolved: (Jean Willis/Colin Sherrard)

**That the proposal is outside the standard budgetary process and after due consideration the application was not supported.**

3.25pm Peter Robinson was invited to re-join the meeting.

Phil Teal left the meeting before this discussion ended.

Paul Stenning left the meeting at 3.35pm to catch his 4.35 pm flight.

## **19 Staff Scholarship**

The recommendations made by managers were accepted by the NZ Council.

Resolved: (Andrew Morris/Paul Stenning)

**That the NZ Council**

- 1. Note that \$10,000 is available for the scholarship from the NZ Council budget for the 2014/15 financial year**
- 2. Agree to support Helen Keeling's application for \$4,998.00 in the 2014/15 financial year.**
- 3. Agree to support Nathan Burkepile's application to bring an international wetland expert to New Zealand to speak on wetland restoration by underwriting costs up to \$5,000 in the 2014/15 financial year.**

## **20 Budget and Business Plan Processes**

Matthew Hall had prepared a paper highlighting what he considered to be shortfalls in current practices and the need to complete matters the NZ Council has agreed require action.

Discussion on points raised continued for some time. It was suggested the debate be held over to another meeting to allow for urgent licence fee matters to be considered. However, this was countered by what some believed to be agreed action that continued to be deferred. Recommendations contained in Matthew's paper were put as resolutions to the Council.



Resolved: (Matthew Hall/Chris Lynch)

1. **That the Council re-affirms its directive for an independent review of the National Office and the chairman with the assistance of the Chief Executive Officer establish a scoping paper that covers the matters that will be reviewed and the likely cost. This paper to be presented for Council approval at the July meeting.**
2. **That Price Waterhouse Cooper, and Maurice Noone a partner, be again approached for his input as part of the scoping exercise.**
3. **That the following shall be an essential part of the review:**
  - a. **Performance of our statutory function through the National Office with particular reference to our national role.**
  - b. **The adequacy or otherwise of our governance policies and their relationship to the workings of the National office.**
  - c. **Current functions of the National office.**
  - d. **Consultation with our Auditors.**
  - e. **Any other matters that are considered appropriate.**
  - f. **Recommendations.**

The subject of membership and role of a NZ Council sub-committee raised for consideration as an extra business item was visited at this point. The name to be given to such a sub-committee was questioned with the need identified for it to be something more than merely a remuneration committee. It was also questioned as to whether a sub-committee could consist of more than three people. The power to co-opt was recognised as one option. The Council's Governance Policies make provision for committees of council and identify an Audit and Risk Committee (Policy 2.3.4.1) consisting of three and a Remuneration Committee (Policy 2.3.4.2) also consisting of three – the Chairman and two others.

Resolved (Matthew Hall/Jean Willis)

**That the Remuneration Committee co-opts Paul Dixon Didier to its committee.**

## **21 2014/14 Fish and Game New Zealand Budget and Licence Fee Recommendations**

The recommendations made by managers were accepted by the NZ Council, i.e. to increase the adult whole season sports fishing licence by \$2.00.

Resolved: (Andrew Morris/Aaron Wakeford)

1. **That NZ Council confirm the 2014/15 Contestable Funding allocations as recommended by Managers with the exception of North Canterbury's proposed Youth Programme which was not supported.**
2. **That for the purpose of consultation with regional Fish and Game Councils, the NZ Council recommend a 2014/15 adult whole season sports fish licence of \$123 and an adult whole season game licence of \$91 (inclusive of a \$2 fee for the Game Bird Habitat Stamp) inclusive of GST.**
3. **That following consultation with regional Fish and Game Councils, the NZ Council hold a telephone conference at 7pm (to be confirmed) Wednesday 18 June to set licence fees for 2014/15.**

Peter Robinson asked his name be recorded as opposing the resolution.

With the meeting about to end, a brief discussion resulted over whether the July meeting scheduled for a two day meeting with a third day as a field trip, should become a two day

meeting spanning a Friday and Saturday or a Saturday and Sunday. There was support for the view that the Council had a number of matters to deal with and that in fact the three days should be retained without a field trip included and devoted solely to Council business.

There being no time left for further business, the Chairman declared the meeting closed at 4.00 pm Sunday 24 May 2014.

Confirmed: \_\_\_\_\_

Date: \_\_\_\_\_ 2014

**Agenda items left due to insufficient time at the May meeting were:**

- 1 2014/15 Draft Business Plan
  - 2 NZ Council meeting dates remaining in 2014
- This item in part was considered, namely the days wanted for the July meeting
- 3 Phase-out of Lead Shot in Sub-gauges
  - 4 Fishing Licence Categories for 2014/15
  - 5 National Licence Sales Report
  - 6 Legal Update Report
  - 7 Mallard Research Update Report
  - 8 Specific Correspondence to the Chairman considered
  - 9 Four specific letters received.